

**Justice Action Group Board of Directors Meeting
December 20, 2021 — 3:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

Present: Justice Mead, Judge Rich, Judge Darvin, Jaye Martin, Liz Stout, Kim Pittman, Nan Heald, Barbara Schlichtman, Deirdre Smith, Laura Pearlman, Victoria Powers, Lauri Boxer-Macomber, Daniel Emery, Michelle Draeger, Charles Dingman, Robyn Merrill

I. CONSENT AGENDA

(These will be considered based on the written report package and not presented at the meeting.)

- A. Welcomes and introductions.
- B. Reports from the ACP members: Justice Mead thanked the providers for their reports and commended them for their outstanding efforts and accomplishments during the pandemic.
- C. Approval of minutes: JAG Board, June 21, 2021 meeting: No additions or corrections were noted. The minutes are accepted and made part of the JAG permanent record.

II. WORKING AGENDA

- A. Report from the Chair (*J. Mead*)
 - i. Inventory review/updates: No updates or corrections were noted.
 - ii. Update on 2021 activities: Justice Mead reported briefly on efforts in the courts to maximize the use of available resources as COVID-19 and its variants continue to surge. All court locations currently remain in the “red zone” as defined in the Judicial Branch’s monitoring system.
 - iii. Update on surcharge corrective bill: The corrective bill has been enacted by the Legislature and the funds should soon be flowing through the Maine Civil Legal Services Fund.

- iv. Access to Justice Tax Credit (36 M.R.S. § 5219-YY): The Legislature recently enacted a statute that allows an income tax credit for up to \$6,000 for up to five attorneys per year who commit to practice in underserved areas and agree to other terms and conditions. The Supreme Judicial Court is to certify the qualifying attorneys to the Maine Revenue Service. The court is currently working on an Administrative Order to establish procedures for application and certification.
 - v. Katahdin Counsel report/ Bar Registration optional reporting: Justice Mead reported that 151 attorneys provided 11,513 hours of pro bono service. These figures represent the second highest annual numbers that the Katahdin Counsel Recognition Program has recorded in its history. Justice Mead is working with the Board of Overseers to revamp the optional pro bono reporting pages in the annual attorney registration to make the process clearer and to produce a more efficient report.
 - vi. Update on Odyssey Case Management System and e-filing: Justice Mead reported that the Maine *eCourts* Odyssey pilot program continues to evolve. Plans for rollout of the system to locations beyond Region V are being reviewed as issues with the new systems are being identified and addressed.
 - vii. *Pro hac vice* fees: Justice Mead reported that the Supreme Judicial Court has responded favorably to a proposal that a portion of *pro hac vice* fees be diverted to civil legal services through the Maine Civil Legal Services Fund. The process will require a statutory amendment that will be presented to a future session of the Legislature.
 - viii. COVID retrospective/what lies ahead: Justice Mead briefly reviewed the Justice Action Group's activities over the last two years and expressed his hope that JAG can move ahead with new initiatives.
- B. Report from the Vice Chair/Pro Bono Committee (*J. Rich*): Judge Rich reported that the Pro Bono Committee continues to meet

quarterly. He reported that membership has been expanded with the addition of two judicial members: retired District Court Judge David Soucy and current District Court Judge Charles Dow.

Kathryn Reid is spearheading the prospect of amending Maine Bar Rule 5(f) to consider allowing some credit for continuing legal education for pro bono work. The current proposal would allow one hour of credit for every 3 hours of CLE with a cap of 3 hours per year.

- C. ACP (*Victoria Powers*): She thanked the providers for their informative reports and commended them on the impressive numbers and what they have achieved during the pandemic. The providers are in touch with their counterparts across the country; everyone is looking for creative ways to continue to provide vital services during these difficult times.
- D. Legislative Committee (*C. Dingman*): Charlie reported that efforts continue to move LD1326 (funding from the General Fund) ahead including meeting with key players in the process.
- E. MSBA (*Kelly MacDonald or designee*): No report today.
- F. MTLA (*Lauri Boxer-Macomber*): The MTLA has just concluded a very successful year of “Lunch and Learns.” All of these CLE sessions have been archived and are accessible through the MTLA web site. The MTLA welcomes suggestions for future topics. The sessions involve attendance fees, but adjustments are available for organizations and individuals with limited resources.
- G. MJF (*Michelle Draeger*): Campaign for Justice continues to do very well at \$593,000, a significant increase over a year ago on the exact same date. The Racial Justice Fund is currently at \$655,000.
- H. New Business: None
- I. Future Meetings of the JAG Board:

June 28, 2022 – 3:00 – Portland – Feeney Conference Room

Dec. 20, 2022 – 3:00 – Portland – Feeney Conference Room

Proposed Future Meetings of the JAG Executive Committee:

Jan. 18, 2022 – 2:00 – Augusta – Zoom

Mar. 15, 2022 – 2:00 – Augusta – SJC Conf. Room

May 17, 2022 – 2:00 – Augusta – SJC Conf. Room

Sept. 19, 2022 - 2:00 – Augusta – SJC Conf. Room

Nov. 14, 2022 - 2:00 - Augusta – SJC Conf. Room

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.